

**Testimony of Marta Santana, Home Visitor, Fair Haven Community Health Center
Nurturing Families Network
Attention: Appropriations Committee
with regard to the Governor's March 1, 2010m Deficit Mitigation Plan
Thursday, March 11, 2010**

Good Evening Chairman and members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Marta Santana. I am a home visitor for the Nurturing Families Network at the Fair Haven Community Center in New Haven. I am here today to urge you to vote against the Governor's proposed budget cuts. Nurturing Families Network continues to provide evidence that our work *does* make a great difference for the families enrolled in our program.

As a Home Visitor, I provide parenting skills and materials that focus on child development. I teach first time parents to advocate for their rights and their children's rights. I help parents to connect with the resources that are available in their communities. I also help parents to understand that child abuse and neglect *should never* be part of a child's development.

I help teens to understand that love and guidance is the key to succeed in their child's life. I encourage them to believe that their goal in life can be possible if they work hard. I have supported my teens to stay in school and find jobs. As a result, I have witnessed how their life has been transformed when these important achievements have been accomplished.

I emphasize that parents are the primary educator in their child's life. As a home visitor, and a mother, I know that having a supportive system in place, such as NFN, is a major need in our society and even more importantly, in the life of our children.

In my culture, we always say and believe that the seed you plant, and continue to nurture will be fruitful. I firmly believe that as a society we are responsible for seeing that our children have a full life, one without child abuse and neglect.

With all respect and in closing, I would also ask that you believe and trust in the important work of the Children's Trust Fund, Nurturing Families Network, and vote against the Governor's proposed budget cuts.

Thank you for your continued support,

Sincerely,

Marta Santana
Marta Santana,

Home Visitor, Nurturing Families Network, Fair Haven Community Health Center